

Where to Begin – Help is Available

If you're interested, you already have the equipment, expertise, and labor to incorporate many of the suggested practices into your farm operations. Look at your financial resources, available time, and other resources, such as water supplies, to determine which practices may be practical for you to consider.

Do you want to spend minimal time planning and see quick results? Then delay fall tillage, leave some of your crop unharvested, winter-flood crop stubble, or don't disc fallow areas if you can tolerate the weeds. Are you also interested in projects with long-lasting results? Then consider such practices as planting a cover crop, creating permanent water sources, growing native perennial plants in non-farmed areas, planting a shelterbelt, or adopting an Integrated Pest Management system.

This publication offers suggestions of *what you can do* to benefit wildlife on your farmlands. If you'd like to restore wildlife populations on more than a piecemeal basis, you'll need information on *how to implement* some of the suggested practices. You'll need to determine what types of habitats are available on your land, which areas are currently used by wildlife, and what types of practices may be best suited to your land, wildlife and crop production goals, and resources.

You can explore these questions on your own or you can request assistance from the agencies and organizations listed on the inside back cover. These groups can provide a range of information, technical assistance, sources for grants, matching funds, and other support.

Since endangered species and wetlands issues remain important concerns to farmers, contact the regulatory agencies listed in the suggested practices to get advice on how to proceed.

Join Other Central Valley Farmers and Farm for Wildlife

For decades, California's natural environment has provided the food, cover, water, and breeding habitat required by hundreds of wildlife species. As our state's population grows and more land is converted to shopping centers, residences, roads, or other uses, the

remaining habitat will become more important to wildlife than ever before.

California's farmlands have had a long tradition of sustaining wildlife. Many of your own Central Valley neighbors have tried some of the suggested practices and are proving that a farm can maintain high productivity as it provides for wildlife.

Small modifications to your current farming practices may not substantially affect your bottom line — but they can make a very meaningful difference to wildlife. Talk with the organizations listed in this publication and let us know what worked for you and what didn't. Allow us to share your accomplishments and let others benefit from your experiences. Help Californians understand that the state's farmlands not only provide food and fiber products for our communities, but also offer vital habitat for California's wildlife.

Ducks Unlimited's Valley Care project is one of many forms of assistance to promote wildlife-friendly farming practices. Pictured: Charlie Matthews and Lena Harned, with a rice roller and post-harvest flooded field in the background.

